Crooked Made Straight

THE CROOKED MADE STRAIGHT.

Luke 13:13 Immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

Intro. Practically all orthodox creeds, in their consideration of things spiritual, ignore the things that are material and earthly, either as having nothing to do with matters spiritual or as having too much to do with evil.

The older I grow and the better acquainted I become with all nature the more clearly do I see the grave error of theology and the more profoundly do I realize that things natural and the things spiritual are not only governed by the one and same God but that also they are governed by the same system of law and order. All things both physical and spiritual are subject toGod.

Crooked Trees.

1. Some trees seemingly grow in all directions, but most of them grow straight up towards the light.

In my wanderings thru forests of various kinds I have come across a few exceptions. One in particular, a tree whose trunk had grown almost parallel to the ground for from ten to fifteen feet, then, suddenly, it grew straight up like a normal tree should.

I wondered what made the tree grow crooked in the first place. Crowded growth? Some obstruction perhaps? Some injury to the tree when it began to sprout?

But the tree had straightened and gotten into line with the other trees about it. In some definite manner the tree had overcome its handicap.

I could'nt help but admire that tree. Others had grown straight from the beginning, but this tree had to fight for its uprightness. This tree had gone wrong and come back. The thot came to my mind that the Lord's promise,"To him that overcometh" might well be applied to this tree. I wondered also if there was more joy in heaven over this crooked tree that had become straight than there was over the other trees that had grown straight from the beginning and had not to put up a struggle.

Crooked Bodies. Jesus said to her, "Woman thou art loosed from thine infirmity."

1. The crippled woman whom Jesus saw in the synagogue and healed. "And he laid his hands upon her and immediately she was ~~x/x/x/x~~ made straight, and glorified God".

2. This woman's body was just like the crooked tree. All bent over and bowed to the earth. Thus for 18 yrs She could't walk erect nor enjoy the freedom of movement of a normal body.

3. There are many others like that woman. There are far mo e crooked bodies than there are crooked trees. God means that bodies should grow straightas well as trees.

Why, then, are bodies so twisted and deformed and diseased? Somewhere along the line, either in the individual or in his parents or forefathers, either from himself or from his surroundings, a wrong has been done, a hurt inflicted contrary to God's law. "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation" is part of an unescapable law.

Insane hospitals, homes of the feeble minded, blind and deaf and dumb institutions all tell the/ the same sad story.

4. But look again at this woman. She is no lomger crooked Her body is straight. She stands erect. A miracle? Divine healing? Yes but not contrary to God's law. God does not discredit the natural with the supernatural Medicine and surgery and sanitation are as divine as prayer is. Back of all the process of life and growth is God.

What a glorious thing it is to see a crooked body made straight! How we marvel at the wonderful achievements of modern surgery and medicine. Thank God for physicians and surgeons and hospitals! Thank God for the healing power which He has placed in every person, in nature itself, for nature tends to heal all wounds and overcome all infirmities.

3. Crooked Souls.

But there are worse things than crooked trees and crooked bodies. We look with horror upon the extreme cases of bodily deformity, the very sight of them is sickening. But if we could only visualize the souls of men, how terrible would the crooked souls appear to be!

There is nothing under heaven more horrifying than crooked souls, made so by a diseased and rottingmoral nature, with the spiritual and moral sense all twisted and bent. Blind minds, deaf hearts and paralized souls. Moral cancer that destroys the normal action of mind and heart and will until the very soul is destroyed.

It is sin that makes the soul crooked. Sin is the product of man's perverted will. It is man's surrender to the baser and animal side of his nature. Of course, bad surroundings, foul air, sordid poverty and vicious associations all aggravate the situation: but the real hurt is self-inflicted.

But God wants the soul to grow straight. God want a person to possess a character of integrity and trustworthiness, a sense of moral decency and self-respect, a mind open to the truth and a heart responsive to the good and holy and lovable and beautiful in life.

Therefore God hates sin, and because He loves the sinner the Almighty is in the business of salvation. God straightens crooked souls as well as crooked bodies and crooked trees. And for this very reason the Gospel of Jesus Christ is indeed good news. No soul is so deformed as to baffle the skill of the divine Surgeon; no soul is so diseased as to be beyond healong power of the Great Physician.

To all bent and twisted souls Jesus still says," "Be loosed from your infirmity".

It is a great hour when a soul in despair lifts itself unto heaven, hears the call of Christ and discovers that what God did for the crooked tree and what Jesus did for the crooked body Our Heavenly Father of us all stands ready to do for the soul of man.